

**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, July 23, 2015; 5:00 p.m.**

Manton Heights

31 Salmon Street

Providence, RI 02903

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nicolas Retsinas called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Nicolas Retsinas
Thomas Ryan
Dolores Cascella
Roger Giraud
Mary Kay Harris
Gilberta 'JT' Taylor
Dorothy Waters

Absent:

John Igliozi
Kevin Jackson
Ricardo Patino
Hilary Silver

Seven members were present constituting a quorum to conduct business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to accept and approve the regular meeting minutes of 05/28/15 and 6/25/15. The motion was made by Commissioner Cascella, seconded by Commissioner Waters. The minutes were approved with a unanimous voice vote.

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS

None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Paul Tavares noted that on July 16, there was a fire in a Unit at Parenti Villa. The unit filled with smoke and the tenant living in the unit was disoriented and has a vision impairment making it difficult for her to find her way out of the unit. One of our own PHA employees, Larry Giorgi went into the unit and rescued the tenant to safety. Unfortunately, Larry suffered smoke inhalation and was hospitalized for overnight, but he is doing much better. Director Tavares was proud to announce and present a Certificate of Recognition to Larry Giorgi for his heroism, dedication and sacrifice for the residents of the Providence Housing Authority.

Next, Director Tavares introduced the new Associate Director of Resident Services, Cheryl Tondreau. He added that Cheryl has 15 years of experience in related fields most recently with Workforce Solutions and the Department of Labor and Training.

At the June, board meeting the Director spoke of the issue with Worker's Compensation new price increase. Legal Counsel reviewed the legalities of the notice whether we were served in a timely manner and found that the provisions in Rhode Island Law that if your premiums go up by more than 10% they have to give more advance notice. However, the law also states exclusion for worker's compensation insurance, ensuring the legal mandate had been met. To determine the specific increase they used was a three-year rolling average of our experience and in 2010 we had \$29,000 fall off the three-year and was replaced by 2013, which was \$194,000 which was

a significant increase. We have a meeting with the Principles of Beacon Mutual to speak of the overall policy and the notice we received.

Additionally, Chad Brown basketball court is near completion. Former Commissioner Nicholas Narducci would like to have a ribbon cutting and it was suggested it be held on August 12, which is the back to school event at Chad Brown. The Director will notify the board when the plans have been finalized.

Director Tavares spoke of the meeting he had with DARE regarding our policies and procedures as it relates to admitting people who have had criminal records. We have decided to work with an existing partner OPEN DOORS, formerly known as the Rhode Island Family Life Center. Their mission is to strengthen the community by supporting the formerly incarcerated.

Finally, last year we received high scores on some of our REAC inspections only to have HUD pull back the scores and request some of the sites be re-inspected. Hartford Park's revised score was 75, with Parenti Village being inspected on July 30, and Coddington Court on August 10 & 11.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Budget and Finance: (Comm. Giraud)
- Resident Services: (Comm. Silver)
- Capital Improvements: (Comm. Cascella)
- Executive Committee: (Chair Retsinas)

Budget & Finance: Commissioner Giraud stated the sub-committee met and the summary financial situation through the end of June FY2015 shows a significant surplus however, there will be some adjustments as we close the books. During the course of the year rental income figures fell off, but then came back. The audit punch list was reviewed and there are very few items left with significant efficiencies in the preparation of the budget process.

Resident Services: Sorrel Devine, Director of Resident Services noted we have two grants one being the HUD Housing Counseling Grant for \$13,447 which supports the Home Ownership Program and the CDBG for level funding in the amount of \$43,347.93. Additionally, the Entrepreneurial Program had an attendance of 10 residents and the Stepping Up Program has 35 people signed up. The Rhode Island Manufacturers Training (CNC Machinists) is full with five people on the waiting list. Melissa Sanzaro, Deputy Executive Director commented 95% of people in the Stepping Up Program retain jobs from the hospitals.

Melissa Sanzaro, stated on August 3, Kilmartin Plaza would be hosting a press conference for the Public Health Institute of Rhode Island for Rhody Food on the Move. Mayor Elorza and Senator Reed will be present. An official invitation will go out to the Board once the flyers are received. In addition, the PHA Employee Appreciation Day has been scheduled for September 18; 1-4 at 12 Acres, Smithfield, RI, invitations will be going out to the commissioners as well as the employees. Melissa updated the commissioners about the CDBG for \$14,000 (per Councilman Seth Yurdin) for Dexter Manor to install new lighting to the east side of Dexter Manor building to increase safety.

Capital Improvements: Commissioner Cascella reported Plans are in process to seal coat and stripe the parking lot at Dexter Manor. Plans are in process to repair the main floor A/C unit at Dominica Manor. An RFP has been advertised for a maintenance contract for the security, energy management, and milestone systems; a pre- RFP meeting was held on Tuesday July 14. Construction is ongoing at the Chad Brown Basketball court; completion is at 99%. A replacement security camera was installed by the basketball court at 48 June St. with a new 360 degree view camera; this will take the place of three security cameras. Melissa added that Carroll Tower requested funding through a legislative grant with Senator Goodwin to place a camera in the parking lot. Commissioner Cascella questioned Representative John Lombardi grant. Marcela Betancur of Special Projects stated the John Lombardi Grant has just ended and we are waiting to reapply again, and the Senator Paul Jabour grant was received for \$2,000.

RESOLUTIONS:**#4234 – Resolution to Amend Fiscal Policy Concerning Capitalization of Fixed Assets**

Executive Director Tavares briefly explained the resolution stating when an entity buys a capital improvement; it needs to depreciate it over a period of time for accounting purposes. Twenty-five years ago, anything over \$500 was a reasonable amount. Our amount has not changed from \$500 over 25 years. The auditors suggested we update that amount to \$5,000. Anything purchased over the value of \$5,000 will be amortized. This resolution changes the schedule; only items in excess of \$5,000 will be put depreciated, according to the schedule, and will lead to a more accurate depreciation expense item, and better inventory control system. The finance committee recommends that the board approve Resolution #4234.

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to approve Resolution #4234. Chairman Retsinas accepted the motion from Commissioner Harris seconded by Commissioner Cascella; a roll call vote was taken. Said motion was unanimously passed 7/0.

OLD BUSINESS

Vice Chairman Ryan questioned the statewide waiting list and section 8 vouchers. Director Tavares stated that Melissa Sanzaro and Donna De La Rosa have attended meetings on the issue so that we can better understand the pros and cons of the matter.

NEW BUSINESS

In keeping with the monthly presentations, Chairman Retsinas asked the Executive Director to key the presentation. Director Tavares gave a brief introduction of the presentation and introduced Richard Weinberg who gave a slide show and presentation on PHA Energy Conservation efforts and monitoring.

After the presentation, commissioners addressed their questions and concerns and thanked Richard for a very informative presentation.

Executive Session

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Retsinas accepted a motion to adjourn from Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Waters. Said motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Lisa Cancelliere
Recording Secretary

Paul Tavares
Executive Director